This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

600077269.

Parables and Tales.

"Not yet to her was Nature's age
In gnarled and hollow shapes revealed."

p. 63

PARABLES AND TALES.

BY

THOMAS GORDON HAKE,

AUTHOR OF "MADELINE," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARTHUR HUGHES.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193 PICCADILLY.

1872.

280. f. 337.

DANIEL BROTHERS
ENGRAVERS & PRINTERS
Camden
Press

Contents.

—:o:—

	Page
Mother and Child	1
The Cripple	11
The Blind Boy	22
Old Morality	35
Old Souls	46
The Lily of the Valley	60
The Deadly Nightshade	77
The Poet	89

Mother and Child.

(1)

THE day its sultry course had run,
The blaze was out, but not the glow;
Still burned the embers of the sun;
The stifled air had lost its flow:
A hot and fevered summer's night,—
The fire of day without the light.

(2)

Within the city, stony, vast,
The streets with ruddy lamplight shine,
With gleams from flaring windows cast
Where thirst is slaked with frothing wine.
Outside, small knots of women wait,
Throwing their line, with eyes for bait.

(3)

Beneath the Opera Colonnade,
Mother and child, coiled up as one,
Sat in the mingling light and shade,
And loved as in an undertone;
Both deaf to all the roaring street,
To clanging wheels and pattering feet.

(4)

The child leans back as if he slept;
His hair is wavy in its fall;
His eyes dream sideways, open kept
By loosely gazing on the wall.
"Poor thing!" says one, and toward them leans;
"She looks but halfway through her teens."

(5)

Heard she the breeze of lofty song?
  Welling, it seemed, from faëry cave,
Or holy place where voices throng
  And pour sweet sounds through aisle and nave;
Now rising to its richest swell,
Now lost as through a broken spell.

(6)

The doors unclose, and wreathéd girls,
  Bounding with life, now press outside;
A blaze past child and mother whirls
  Of silks, and gems, and purple pride.
Does no fair face among the gay
Look on the helpless with dismay?

(7)

Through wide-flung doors, with sudden gush,
  The rays of light a nimbus place
Upon the infant's brow, and flush
  With hectic rose the mother's face.
To one the light a halo seems
That round an infant Saviour beams.

(8)

Through this girl's soul the picture thrills:
To generous impulse she is led;
But slowly as a pitcher fills
With water on a shallow bed,
Too slowly did her pitying sight
Absorb this vision of the night.

(9)

Her lover's voice her thoughts beguiled,
And turned them in an eddy round:
'T was but a woman and a child—
She left them on the stony ground;
Yet felt the appealing moment fly,
And sting her breast in passing by.

(10)

Through dreams, that night, she seeks in tears
Something through all the stony street;
'T is lost, but wailing in her ears,
An infant's cry directs her feet.
Yet, strange! she finds in every place
Her lover's, not the infant's, face.

(11)

Next morn one thought her being sways—
  One great desire—one longing wild—
To search the streets, the narrow ways,
  For that lone mother and her child.
Ah! she has let the hour depart;
Her feet cannot o'ertake its start.

(12)

As long-loved features reappear
  Across the tearful gulf of death,
Mother and child seem ever near:
  Stone arch above, stone steps beneath.
She paints this to relieve her heart,
Hoping the vision may depart.

(13)

Like one who Child and Mother met
  Unheeding, in the olden day,
To dream with after-born regret
  On heavenly beauty passed away,
Her soul yearned for a vanished sight,—
The tender vision of that night.

(14)

One morn, at church, aloud she cried,
"Oh, help me, help me, that I find
The vision which I once denied,
Or take it from my weary mind!"
Whilst asking for the aid of grace,
The vision met her face to face.

(15)

Close at the mother's bosom, bare
That it might suck, the infant lay;
The mother, worn with toil and care,
Knelt on the chequered stone to pray.
The lady's heart leapt with a bound;
Her prayer was heard, the lost were found!

(16)

She bade the trembling mother come,
And on her way rejoicing went,
Leading the lost ones to her home,
On acts of love and mercy bent;
And yearned, as in old days seemed meet,
To stoop and wash the stranger's feet.

(17)

She clothed and laved the wandering pair,
Smiling upon them as they smiled.
Never was seen a sight so fair—
This lady hanging o'er the child!
Now in her arms the child she took,
Thinking to see a Saviour's look.

(18)

But as she gazed, dreams flitted by,
In which her lover's face appears—
His rounded brow, his bright blue eye.
Surely this child his aspect wears!
Ah! what wild instinct bids her trace
A likeness to his well-known face?

(19)

What thoughts, what doubts, what spectre-fears
Now through her trembling soul defile?
What darkening horror now appears?
What is it in the baby-smile?
His lips, his eyes confront her gaze—
Lover and child in what strange maze!

(20)

The mother notes the lady's pain:
"I was the wretched one till now;
Has the slow anguish of my brain
Thus in a moment tinged your brow?
My misery I must e'en endure;
But whence the anguish of the pure?

(21)

"Though I have erred, still on the base
Less blame than pity you bestow.
Why then this anguish on your face,
This dreadful look, this crimson glow?
Lady, you fill my soul with fears!
Ah! now you turn away in tears!"

(22)

"What child is this?" the lady cried,
Through claspéd hands that hid her face.
"A child whose father has denied
The loveliest flower of all his race!
Ah! he its smile has never known,
Yet is the mouth that smiles his own.

(23)

"But he a nobler woman seeks,
And lets me beg from door to door."
"Her name? her name?" the lady shrieks.
"The Lady May of Alton Moor."
"Woman, get hence!" the lady cried;
"I know thy wicked tongue hath lied!"

(24)

Lip-words that came not from the heart,
Where maddening whispers said, "'T is true!"
She stood and quivered, for the dart
Struck through her cherished love, and slew.
Was it for this, while others slept,
Her feet had roved, her eyes had wept?

(25)

She turns away with one low wail.
Pity had fled; but now, to rack
Her heart, the mother's sobs assail
Her ears, and bring her pity back.
The infant raised his arms and sprang
Towards her, unconscious of her pang.

(26)

The sunlight dancing round the boy,
He seemed the type of heavenly love,—
Pure, holy, without earth's alloy,—
Bearing a message from above:
"Have I not saved you?" As he leapt,
That question to her bosom crept.

(27)

The picture filled her soul with awe,
Yet gave she thanks to Heaven, whose grace
Through that sweet child at last she saw;
And, clasping it in her embrace,
Cried: "Be it mine to palliate
Wrongs that avert my threatened fate!

(28)

"To him that gave me love in words
May Heaven with mercy temper blame,
Who pity to us all accords,
Even in the depths of burning shame.
My saviour is this little child;
Through him my heart be reconciled!"

The Cripple.

(1)

A BROOK beneath the hill-side flows
Amid the downs, whose chalky sweep
A scant though tender herbage grows,
Cropped close by scattered flocks of sheep.
And there a group of huts is seen
Dotted along a village green.

(2)

Yet, buildings of a statelier look
That poor sequestered valley grace:
An inn beside the village brook;
A church beside the burial-place.
Save at the park, the trees are few;
Still the old graveyard has its yew.

(3)

Beyond the park, the ring-dove's haunt,
Red bricks insult the smokeless sky:
There stands the workhouse, bare and gaunt,
Like the drear soul of poverty,
And frowns upon a mossy fen,
Where willows crouch like agéd men.

(4)

All life surrounds the road-side inn,
The home of welcome and good cheer,
Where barmaid scores the gill of gin
And oft-repeated pot of beer:
Unlike the fashion of the town—
To drink and fling the money down.

(5)

The wife, with eggs and milk for sale,
Wrapt in the coat of her good man,
Stops there and takes her drop of ale
While waiting for her empty can,
And, nodding at the landlord's sport,
Keeps for the last her smart retort.

(6)

The good man, always on his mare,
Stops with familiar nod and wink,
And bids the landlord with him share
His amber draught of foamy drink;
With chuckling joke concludes his say,
And laughs when out of hearing's way.

(7)

There with his team the carter stays,
The water-trough his horses find;
Worn out himself, he little says—
No fun has he to leave behind.
To slake his thirst no means at call,
His team he follows to their stall.

(8)

The squire, addicted not to chat,
But seldom draws the rein or speaks;
Seeing the landlord touch his hat,
Into a quiet trot he breaks;
Save at election, when he stops
To praise the children or the crops.

(9)

Between the horse-trough and the door
A widow's son was wont to stand.
He was a cripple, crutched and poor,
Yet always ready with a hand,
Pleased when on trifling errands sent,
With little recompense content.

(10)

So oft a copper coin the boy
Would earn, that helped to buy him bread,
Too glad to get such light employ:
The parish all his mother's dread.
Hard had she worked to earn him food
Through all her weary widowhood.

(11)

More did that mother love her son
  Than had he been the fairest born;
He was her pride to look upon,
  Though shrunk of limb and feature worn:
Maybe she loved him all the more
For that his legs were crookt and sore.

(12)

As a wrecked vessel on the sand,
  The cripple to his mother clung:
Close to the tub he took his stand
  While she the linen washed and wrung;
And when she hung it out to dry
The cripple still was standing by.

(13)

When she went out to char, he took
  His fife, to play some simple snatch
Before the inn hard by the brook,
  While for the traveller keeping watch,
Against the horse's head to stand,
Or hold its bridle in his hand.

(14)

Sometimes the squire his penny dropped
Upon the road for him to clutch,
Which, as it rolled, the cripple stopped,
Striking it nimbly with his crutch.
The groom, with leathern belt and pad,
E'en found a copper for the lad.

(15)

The farmer's wife her hand would dip
Down her deep pocket with a sigh;
Some halfpence in his hand would slip,
When there was no observer nigh;
Or give him apples for his lunch,
That he loved leisurely to munch.

(16)

But for the farmer, what he made,
At market table he would spend,
And boys who used not plough or spade
Had got the parish for their friend;
He paid his poor rates to the day,
So let the boy ask parish-pay.

(17)

Yet would the teamster feel his fob,
The little cripple's heart to cheer,
Himself of penny pieces rob,
That he begrudged to spend in beer;
His boy, too, might be sick or sore,
So gave he of his thrifty store.

(18)

A sheep-worn walk along the brook
The cripple loved to trace: the gush
Of water thralled him as it shook
The ragged roots of the green rush,
Which with its triple flowers of pink
Stood ripe for gathering at the brink.

(19)

The heather bristles round the knoll,
Where inlaid moss and leaflets blend:
'T is there he sits and ends his stroll,
His crutch beside him as his friend,
And looks upon the other bank,
Where blue forget-me-not grows rank;

(20)

Where purple loosestrife paints the sedge;—
Where bryony and yellow bine,
Locked in blush-bramble, climb the hedge,
And white convolvulus enshrine.
Nestled in leaves, they all appear
Each other's flowers to nurse and rear.

(21)

There mused he like a child of yore,
With sense not trammelled or misled
By cog and wheel of human lore:
On Nature's simple teachings fed.
The Shaper of his destiny
He felt was smiling from the sky.

(22)

There with soft notes his fife he filled—
A mere tin plaything from the mart,
With holes at equal distance drilled,
To which his fingers grace impart,
While it obeys his lips' control,
And is a crutch unto his soul.

(23)

At church he longed his fife to try,
Where oboe gave its doleful note,
Where fiddle scraped harsh melody,
Where bass the rustic vitals smote.
Such music then was all in vogue,
And psalms were sung in village brogue.

(24)

His cheerful ways gave many cause
For wonder; nay, his very joy
To others' mirth would give a pause:
His soul so like his body's toy,
So childish, yet with face of age,
Beginning at life's latter stage.

(25)

Dead is his crutch on moping days—
'T is so they call his sickly fits,
When by his side his crutch he lays,
And in the chimney-corner sits,
Hobbling in spirit near the yew
That in the village churchyard grew.

(26)

Ah! it befell at harvest-time,—
Such are the ways of Providence,—
That the poor widow in her prime
Was fever-struck, and hurried hence;
Then did he wish indeed to lie
Between her arms and with her die.

(27)

Who shall the cripple's woes beguile?
Who earn the bread his mouth to feed?
Who greet him with a mother's smile?
Who tend him in his utter need?
Who lead him to the sanded floor?
Who put his crutch behind the door?

(28)

Who set him in his wadded chair,
And after supper say his grace?
Who to invite a loving air
His fife upon the table place?
Who, as he plays, her eyes shall lift
In wonder at a cripple's gift?

(29)

Who ask him all the news that chanced—
Of farmer's wife in coat and hat,
Of squire who to the city pranced—
To draw him out in lively chat?
This flood of love, now but a surf
Left on a nameless mound of turf.

(30)

Some it made sigh, and some made talk,
To see the guardian of the poor
Call for the boy to take a walk,
And lead him to the workhouse door:
With lifted hands and boding look
They watched him cross the village brook.

The Blind Boy.

(1)

IN dark ascent the pine-clad hills
Repose on heaven their rocky crest,
Lit by the flash of falling rills
That in the valley seek for rest,
Chafing in rainbow-spray when thrust
Into the sunshine by the gust.

(2)

Clouds folded round the topmost peaks,
Shut out the gorges from the sun
Till mid-day, when the early streaks
Of sunshine down the valley run;
But where the opening cliffs expand,
The early sea-light breaks on land.

(3)

Before the sun, like golden shields,
The clouds a lustre shed around;
Wild shadows gambolling o'er the fields;
Tame shadows stretching o'er the ground.
Towards noon the great rock-shadow moves,
And takes slow leave of all it loves.

(4)

Then beam-shot clouds dissolve apace;
Stray shades, yet lingering, like a scroll,
Drawn nearer to their craggy base,
Into its clefts and caverns roll;
The light falls down the rocky piles;
The vale a lake of glory smiles.

(5)

There dwell two orphans: Heaven ordains
  The sister's eyes shall live in light:
Her brother in the shade remains
  When morning bursts upon her sight.
Sister and brother, far and wide
They wander ever side by side.

(6)

When to the shore through woods and fields
  The brother has a wish to stray,
The sister takes the hand he yields;
  She by fond habit leads the way.
Skipping along, oft face to face,
Her hand directs his timid pace.

(7)

The plains that strike the grey-white line
  Where earth's mild curve in distance fades;
The streams that near the dwelling shine;
  The quiet meads; the rustling glades;
The sand-dunes waiting on the shore,
The sister's eyes for him explore.

(8)

'T is all his own, yet her loved hand,
Her gentle voice, her sayings dear,
Are choicer gifts than all the land
That he inherits far and near,
For all his light is in her mind,—
The path he loses she can find.

(9)

At early morn, embraced by her,
He sits within the shadow's dip
To list to his sweet minister,
And paint his visions from her lip.
He sees the waters, earth, and skies
Only through her enchanted eyes.

(10)

She owns the soul-illuming ray!
Her eyes are bright—his now are blind;
As morn and eve join hands in day,
The sister's seeks the brother's mind.
Darkness he bears and she bears light;
Hers is the morn and his the night.

(11)

She tells him how the mountains swell,
How rocks and forests touch the skies;
He tells her how the shadows dwell
In purple dimness on his eyes,
Whose tremulous orbs the while he lifts,
As round his smile their spirit drifts.

(12)

More close around his heart to wind,
She shuts her eyes in childish glee,
"To share," she said, "his peace of mind;
To sit beneath his shadow-tree."
So, half in play, the sister tries
To find his soul within her eyes.

(13)

His hand in hers, she walks along
And leads him to the river's brink;
She stays to hear the water's song,
Closing her eyes with him to think.
His ear, more watchful than her own,
Caught up the ocean's distant moan.

(14)

"The river's flow is bright and clear,"
The blind boy said, "and were it dark
We should no less its music hear:
Sings not at eventide the lark?
Still when the ripples pause, they fade
Upon my spirit like a shade."

(15)

"Yet, brother, when the river stops,
And in the quiet bay is hushed,
E'en though its gentle murmur drops,
'T is bright as when by us it rushed;
It is not like a shade the more,
Except beneath the wooded shore."

(16)

Now the resounding beach, wave-swept,
Greets them; now silence softly bears
The likeness of the waves that leapt
Unseen, and broke upon their ears.
"Dear sister, tell me once again
The wonders of the sea's domain!"

(17)

Down the moist sands she guides his way,
And gazes on the lonesome shore,
Where desultory waves at play,
Rivet her looks ere they explore
The far off deep: ere those quick eyes
Rove o'er the waters, cliffs, and skies.

(18)

"The farthest seas bend as a bow
Into the light, o'er-arching sky;
There, curdled breakers row on row
With scarce a motion, distant lie;
Or if one vanish from the rest,
It shows again its snowy crest.

(19)

"But nearer, midway toward the sands,
I see long lines of billows creep;
One stops and into froth expands,
Then fades away upon the deep;
Close to the shore the waves contend,
And shouting reach the journey's end."

(20)

When her bright tones upon him broke
The curtain from his soul was drawn;
His spirit quickened as she spoke,—
And flashed as at a sudden dawn,
With visions of a world once known,
That for the moment seemed his own.

(21)

"O tell me of the changing sky,—
Sunless and dreary now!" "'T is blue,
Save where loose clouds float slowly by,
Of orange, white, and inky hue.
The shifting waves in green unrest
Beneath the heavy gusts are pressed.

(22)

"Now warmth is pouring from the sun;
The sea's sky-blue skims o'er the green,
Even up its billows while they run
And drip their foam in troughs between.
O could you see them as they roar—
Scooping away the glistening shore!"

(23)

"The waves with mingling echoes fall;
And memories of a long-lost light
From far-off mornings seem to call,
And what I hear comes into sight.
The beauteous skies flash back again,
But, ah! the light will not remain!"

(24)

Awhile he pauses; as he stops,
Her little hand the sister moves
And pebbles on the water drops,
As it runs up the sandy grooves,
Or to her ear a shell applies,
With parted lips and dreaming eyes.

(25)

"That noise!" said he, with lifted hand.
"The sea-gull's scream and flapping wings.
Before the wind it flies to land,
And omens of a tempest brings."
She tells him how the sea-bird pale
Whirls wildly on the coming gale.

(26)

"And is the sea alone? Even now
I hear faint mutterings." "'T is the waves."
"It seems a murmur sweeping low
And hurrying through the distant caves.
I hear again that smothered tone,
As if the sea were not alone."

(27)

"Heaven slopes above on every side,
And shuts us from the distant land.
The waters only here abide,
And we who sit upon the sand.
A porpoise revels in the spray,
And purple vapours veil the bay.

(28)

"Come, hasten to the shivering woods,
Where twisted boughs are thickly set,
For soon the rain must fall in floods.
Let us seek shelter from the wet.
While like a sea the sky upheaves,
We 'll watch beneath the matted leaves."

(29)

"Stay, sister! Listen to that sound;—
It thunders—did the flash appear?"
"It lightens now, and, whirling round,
The gull dips low, as if in fear."
The boy now turns his floating eyes,
Though not the way the sea-bird flies.

(30)

"The wind is balmy on my cheek,
But now I feel the rain-drop plash.
Let us," he said, "the woodland seek,
And hear it on the foliage dash.
There the ground-ivy we will tread,
And through the grove its perfume spread."

(31)

And so they prattle as they leave
The sandy beach, in pensive mood,
His ear turned to the billows' heave,
Her vision leaning on the wood,
While, as the honeysuckle clings,
About his neck her arm she flings.

(32)

Better than she the blind boy hears
The whispers of the patient shore,
While yet the wave its crest uprears
To break once more,—and evermore.
Better than she the blind boy feels
The simple pictures she reveals.

(33)

Clapping her hands, she spies above
Rich elms, the turrets grey and old,—
But love of home was only love
When to her darling brother told.
Thus ever to his soul replies
The infant passion of her eyes.

(34)

While they return, the dwelling near,
One word must yet the sister say.
She lifts her voice: "O brother dear,
If good my eyes have been to-day,
Kiss them for every new delight
That kindles in your spirit's sight!"

(35)

Deep in his eyes the love-lights strove;
He clasped her in a close embrace:—
With lips that shook with grateful love,
He kissed her eyes—he kissed her face—
He wept upon that tender brow;
"Dearest, the darkness leaves me now!

(36)

"I view all beauty through your eyes;
I see within, you see outside.
Your love has raised me to the skies,—
Once narrow,—lofty now and wide,
And not, as once, of sombre hue;
For I can dream the dark to blue.

(37)

"The upward-toiling hill; the stream;
The valley; the wide ocean's sweep;
All take the colours of a dream,—
The glories of the land of sleep.
You are my soul, my eyes, my sight;
'T is dark no more, for you are light."

Old Morality.

(1)

THE earth, save here and there where stones
May turn the edge of sexton's spade,
Is a receptacle for bones,—
A grotto for the wayworn made.
One key unlocks its doors—the steel
Under the sexton's heavy heel.

(2)

A mortal warning damped the town,—
The uncaged spirit's pilot-bell!
Though known the Squire was stricken down,
'T was vouched-for he was doing well;
Some said they saw him riding out
The hour his death was noised about.

(3)

When fully warned that all must die,
Which meant the Squire, a spot of soil
He chose, and asked in peace to lie
Where rest the poor from sweat and toil.
Them he forgot not, them he gave
All he could carry to the grave.

(4)

The folk were touched; this, after all,
Brought human feelings to their door.
Forth went the sexton to instal
This loving Squire among his poor,
Muttering the thought that next him lay:
"All that he gives he takes away."

(5)

Some joined the sexton in a chat;
Some shunned him for a churchyard fool;
Yet earnest at his work, he spat
Upon his hand and grasped his tool,
Then chopping out the narrow span,
Bade earth precedence yield to man.

(6)

His frame was strong; for 'six spit deep'
The earth gives out a wholesome scent:
Yet would his blood within him creep,—
For his mind's eye, on death intent,
Most ghostly visions now and then
Turned over with the bones of men.

(7)

'Six spit besides the crumbs' he gave
New comers, on their journey bound,
Who rested half-way at the grave.
There would he linger by the mound
Till peace seemed mingled with the clay,—
And, lo! a dream of yesterday!

(8)

What marvel if the sexton's talk
  Ran in trite sayings of the dead?
If in their midst his daily walk,
  Their annals needs must crowd his head.
His path in life at best was dull,—
Just here a rib, just there a skull.

(9)

He pitied bones that had no breath;
  He blamed the body-snatcher's trade,
That showed no mercy unto death;
  He spared the worm beneath his spade.
Stray, worn-out bones he hid away
When corpses came in bright array.

(10)

The church was smeared with frosty dew;
  The frozen clock discounted time;
With hoar were fretted tombs and yew,—
  The wintry graveyard white with rime.
Fresh-broken earth of fading red,
By streaks of ice was riveted.

(11)

The sexton little mourns his loss
Whose dust must soon that grave bestrew.
With bone on bone he forms a cross,
And plants a skull between the two,
Then emulates the Squire's address,
In terms befitting this recess.

(12)

Again the tolling bell was heard,
As into rhapsody he broke.
The rime had gathered on his beard;
His breath was thick as curling smoke;
The sky frost-bitten, hard and dun,
And ice-spots on the glittering sun.

(13)

"O skull, dishabited and nude,
When will this earth be scalped like thee?
Thou bearest strange similitude
To a round globe without a tree,
Without a grass-blade, or a tide
Ridges and hollows to divide!

(14)

"Were thy revolving thoughts of old
False satellites that lit thy way?
Lustrous, conspicuous and bold,
They once were visible by day!"
But here his speech, cut short by fear,
Dropped,—as though listeners were near.

(15)

Close to him seemed the distant Hall.
The startling sight his musings stayed:
The leafless elm trees, gaunt and tall,
Stood up in vapoury shroud arrayed;
They hung in mist their deeper gloom,
Like spectres at the house of doom.

(16)

The fog grew denser with the thaw;
He raised his spade to shoulder it,
When by the new-dug grave he saw
A stranger gazing in the pit:
The fresh-dug grave, no tenant yet;
Upon a lease of ages let.

(17)

Dense as a cloud the stranger's breath
  Was hanging in the sexton's way.
Was it the Company of Death
  Had sent a message, "Cold to-day!"
Though filled with terror and surprise,
The sexton's talk got weatherwise.

(18)

Then said the stranger, "Pray how soon
  Is the Squire's burial to be?"
The sexton said, "This afternoon
  At half-past two o'clock, for three.
I shall be ready at my post,
For none so punctual as 'mine host.'

(19)

"At once to bed proceeds my guest;
  He lies not down by candlelight.
To get for once a thorough rest,
  He fixes on the longest night.
He cares not where his head is laid,
Nor bears in mind the chambermaid."

(20)

"As an old sexton, truly tell,"
Observed the stranger who stood by,
"Where lie the bones, remembered well,
Of one named Old Morality?
Among these stones, maybe, a trace
Is left to mark his resting-place."

(21)

As one set guessing in the dark,
The sexton had a puzzled eye
When asked, as of a man of mark,
Where tarried Old Morality;
Yet did the name some meaning bring;
It had a half-familiar ring.

(22)

"For twenty years, or thereabout,"
The sexton said, "I've turned the sod,
And seen a generation out,
Still to my mind the name sounds odd.
It stands not on the register;
But if you wish it, pray refer.

(23)

"No vestige here remains to tell
Aught of his sepulture or fate:
But there are ciphers some can spell
On tombstones, once articulate;
For there are scholars hereabout
Can read a name clean blotted out.

(24)

"Mayhap of better bones than rest
In common graves, the news you seek:
Within the church we keep our best;
The flagstones with their virtues reek.
There lie our parsons by the score;
Yet none that name exactly bore.

(25)

"There is the porch; the wicket-gate
Within is free to him who knocks—
On holy days; but, not to wait,
This private key the door unlocks.
There, thick as coral-reefs, men's bones
Lie matted underneath the stones."

(26)

"Then is all record lost, all trace?
Does no fond shade in memory rise,
Bringing to mind his burial-place?
No yearning, not a last surmise?
Ere now a scudding glimpse of thought,
Things long forgot to mind has brought."

(27)

These words rang through the sexton's head.
He looked at vacancy like one
Who pondered o'er some page he read
Until he found all meaning gone.
Brought to a stand, a skull he took
And turned it over like a book.

(28)

Then said the sexton, "By my spade!
None such among us ever thrived,
Or by his acts disciples made,
Though many through this turf have dived.
Mayhap some other yard contains
The bones you seek as his remains."

(29)

"No; I have crossed in vain the bounds
Of many lands," the stranger said,
"And searched the consecrated grounds
Where bones of other ghosts are laid.
To me great men their lineage trace,
But who can show my resting-place?

(30)

"The earth my very name hath lost,
Though bristling with memorial stones:
I go its round, the only ghost
That knows not where to find his bones.
Yet surely did I once exist"—
This said, he melted into mist.

Old Souls.

(1)

THE world, not hushed, lay as in trance
It saw the future in its van,
And drew its riches in advance,
To meet the greedy wants of man;
Till length of days, untimely sped,
Left its account unaudited.

(2)

The sun, untired, still rose and set,—
  Swerved not an instant from its beat;
It had not lost a moment yet,
  Nor used in vain its light and heat;
But, as in trance, from when it rose
To when it sank, man craved repose.

(3)

A holy light that shone of yore
  He saw, despised, and left behind:
His heart was rotting to the core
  Locked in the slumbers of the mind:
Not beat of drum, nor sound of fife,
Could rouse it to a sense of life.

(4)

A cry was heard, intoned and slow,
  Of one who had no wares to vend:
His words were gentle, dull, and low,
  And he called out, "Old souls to mend!"
He peddled on from door to door,
And looked not up to rich or poor.

(5)

His step kept on as if in pace
With some old timepiece in his head,
Nor ever did its way retrace;
Nor right nor left turned he his tread
But uttered still his tinker's cry
To din the ears of passers-by.

(6)

So well they knew the olden note
Few heeded what the tinker spake,
Though here and there an ear it smote
And seemed a sudden hold to take;
But they had not the time to stay,
And it would do some other day.

(7)

Still on his way the tinker wends,
Though jobs be far between and few;
But here and there a soul he mends
And makes it look as good as new.
Once set to work, once fairly hired,
His dull old hammer seems inspired.

(8)

Over the task his features glow;
He knocks away the rusty flakes;
A spark flies off at every blow;
At every rap new life awakes.
The soul once cleansed of outward sins,
His subtle handicraft begins.

(9)

Like iron unannealed and crude,
The soul is plunged into the blast;
To temper it, however rude,
'T is next in holy water cast;
Then on the anvil it receives
The nimblest stroke the tinker gives.

(10)

The tinker's task is at an end:
Stamped was the cross by that last blow.
Again his cry, "Old souls to mend!"
Is heard in accents dull and low.
He pauses not to seek his pay,—
That too will do another day.

(11)

One stops and says, "This soul of mine
Has been a tidy piece of ware,
But rust and rot in it combine,
And now corruption lays it bare.
Give it a look: there was a day
When it the morning hymn could say."

(12)

The tinker looks into his eye,
And there detects besetting sin,
The decent old-established lie,
That creeps through all the chinks within.
Lank are its tendrils, thick its shoots,
And like a worm's nest coil the roots.

(13)

Its flowers a deadly berry bear,
Whose seed, if tended from the pod,
Had grown in beauty with the year,
Like deodara drawn to God;
Not as the dank and curly brake,
That fosters venom for the snake.

(14)

The tinker takes the weed in tow,
And roots it out with tooth and nail;
His labour patient to bestow,
Lest like the herd of men he fail.
How best to extirpate the weed,
Has grown with him into a creed.

(15)

His tack is steady, slow, and sure:
He plucks it out, despite the howl,
With gentle hand and look demure,
As cunning maiden draws a fowl.
He knows the job he is about,
And pulls till all the lie is out.

(16)

"Now steadfastly regard the man
Who wrought your cure of rust and rot!
You saw him ere the work began:
Is he the same, or is he not?
You saw the tinker; now behold
The Envoy of a God of old."

(17)

This said, he on the forehead stamps
The downward stroke and one across,
Then straight upon his way he tramps;
His time for profit, not for loss;
His task no sooner at an end
Than out he cries, "Old souls to mend!"

(18)

As night comes on he enters doors,
He crosses halls, he goes upstairs,
He reaches first and second floors,
Still busied on his own affairs.
None stop him or a question ask;
None heed the workman at his task.

(19)

Despite his cry, "Old souls to mend!"
Which into dull expression breaks,
Not moved are they, nor ear they lend
To him who from old habit speaks;
Yet does the deep and one-toned cry
Send thrills along eternity.

(20)

He gads where out-door wretches walk,
  Where outcasts under arches creep;
Among them holds his simple talk.
  He lets them hear him in their sleep.
They who his name have still denied,
He lets them see him crucified.

(21)

On royal steps he takes a stand
  To light the beauties to the ball;
He holds a lantern in his hand,
  And lets his simple saying fall.
They deem him but some sorry wit
Serving the Holy Spirit's writ.

(22)

They know not souls can rust and rot,
  And deem him, while he says his say,
The tipsy watchman who forgot
  To call out "Carriage stops the way!"
They know not what it can portend,
This mocking cry, "Old souls to mend!"

(23)

While standing on the palace stone,
He is in workhouse, brothel, jail;
He is to play and ball-room gone,
To hear again the beauties rail;
With tender pity to behold
The dead alive in pearls and gold.

(24)

In meaning deep, in whispers low
As bubble bursting on the air,
He lets the solemn warning flow
Through jewelled ears of creatures fair,
Who, while they dance, their paces blend
With his mild words, "Old souls to mend!"

(25)

And when to church their sins they take,
And bring them back to lunch again,
And fun of empty sermons make,
He whispers softly in their train;
And sits with them if two or more
Think of a promise made of yore.

(26)

Of those who stay behind to sup,
And in remembrance eat the bread,
He leads the conscience to the cup,
His hands across the table spread.
When contrite hearts before him bend,
Glad are his words, "Old souls to mend!"

(27)

The little ones before the font
He clasps within his arms to bless;
For Childhood's pure and guileless front
Smiles back his own sweet gentleness.
"Of such," he says "my kingdom is,
For they betray not with a kiss."

(28)

He goes to hear the vicars preach:
They do not always know his face,
Him they pretend the way to teach,
And, as one absent, ask his grace.
Not then his words, "Old souls to mend!"
Their spirits pierce or bosoms rend.

(29)

He goes to see the priests revere
His image as he lay in death:
They do not know that he is there;
They do not feel his living breath,
Though to his secret they pretend
With incense sweet, old souls to mend.

(30)

He goes to hear the grand debate
That makes his own religion law;
But him the members, as he sate
Below the gangway, never saw.
They used his name to serve their end,
And others left old souls to mend.

(31)

Before the church-exchange he stands,
Where those who buy and sell him, meet:
He sees his livings changing hands,
And shakes the dust from off his feet.
Maybe his weary head he bows,
While from his side fresh ichor flows.

(32)

From mitred peers he turns his face.
Where priests convoked in session plot,
He would remind them of his grace
But for his now too humble lot;
So his dull cry on ears devout
He murmurs sadly from without.

(33)

He goes where judge the law defends,
And takes the life he can't bestow,
And soul of sinner recommends
To grace above, but not below;
Reserving for a fresh surprise
Whom it shall meet in Paradise.

(34)

He goes to meeting, where the saint
Exempts himself from deadly ire,
But in a strain admired and quaint
Consigns all others to the fire,
While of the damned he mocks the howl,
And on the tinker drops his scowl.

(35)

Go here, go there, they cite his word,
While he himself is nigh forgot.
He hears them use the name of Lord,
He present though they know him not.
Though he be there, they vision lack,
And talk of him behind his back.

(36)

Such is the Church and such the State.
Both set him up and put him down,—
Below the houses of debate,
Above the jewels of the crown.
But when "Old souls to mend!" he says,
They send him off about his ways.

(37)

He is the humble, lowly one,
In coat of rusty velveteen,
Who to his daily work has gone;
In sleeves of lawn not ever seen.
No mitre on his forehead sticks:
His crown is thorny, and it pricks.

(38)

On it the dews of mercy shine;
From heaven at dawn of day they fell;
And it he wears by right divine,
Like earthly kings, if truth they tell;
And up to heaven the few to send,
He still cries out, "Old souls to mend!"

The Lily of the Valley.

(1)

THERE was a wood, it does not change,
Not while the thrush pipes through its glades,
And she who did its thickets range
Has willed her sunbeam to its shades.
There still the lily weaves a net
With bluebell, primrose, violet.

(2)

The wood is what it was of old,
A timber-farm where wild flowers grow.
There woodman's axe is never cold,
That lays the oaks and beeches low.
But though the hand of man deface,
The lily ever grows in grace.

(3)

Of loving natures, proudly shy,
The stock-doves sojourn in the tree,
With breasts of feathered cloud and sky,
And notes of soft though tuneless glee:
Hid in the leaves they take a spring,
And crush the stillness with their wing.

(4)

The wood is deep-boughed, and its glade
Has ruts of waggon to and fro;
Yet where the print of wheel is made
The bracken ventures still to grow;
And where the foot of man may goad,
The ants are toiling with their load.

(5)

The wood, even old in olden days,
No longer alters with the year.
The gnarléd boughs, to Nature's ways
Inured, their honours mildly bear.
And she who there has fixed her beam
Is still remembered as a dream.

(6)

There many a legend of the wood
Has hovered from the olden time,
When, with their sooths and sayings good,
Men told not of its youth or prime.
The hollow trunks were hollow then,
And honoured like the bones of men.

(7)

There like nine brethren, Nature's own,
Nine trees within a circle stand,
And to a temple's shape have grown,
Each trunk a column tall and grand.
And, there, a raven-oak uprears
Its dome that whitens with the years.

(8)

'Mid these, while on the earth at play,
She, the true beam of living spring,
The playmate of the lily's ray,
Learnt of the piping thrush to sing.
The lily's leaves were then her nest,
Its buds half-nestled in her breast.

(9)

To her whose beam was lily-bright
'Neath brakes that hide the sky above,
A primrose seemed a holy sight:
Loveless itself, it taught her love.
It was her welcome to the bowers,
And lured her fingers to its flowers.

(10)

Not yet to her was Nature's age
In gnarled and hollow shapes revealed:
The buds and leaflets stamped her page,
And all that Death could say concealed.
To gnarled and hollow Nature cold,
She had not caught the sense of old.

(11)

When folk who gossipped thereabout
Asked the child's name,—the child so pale,—
With looks that gave a sweetness out,
She answered, "Lily of the Vale."
Not then her eyes had dew-drops shed
In early tribute to the dead.

(12)

Alas! her parents came to die;
She was not then too young to weep.
Through all the wood was heard her cry;
At length with sobs she fell asleep.
Changed in that slumber was her beam;
Changed was the import of her dream.

(13)

The lilies in their nest had died,
Violets were closed, their petals crushed,
The bracken-stalks were parched and dried,
The flowers she loved no longer blushed.
Now did her soul its scale ascend;
Her dawn of joys was at an end.

(14)

While 'neath the oak she lay asleep
She saw its gnarled and hollow form;
The riven branches seemed to creep,
Loosed was their long-enchanted storm.
The raven-oak, the tree she loved,
Through all her soul in ruin moved.

(15)

That oak, oft seen by her before,
But heeded not as weird and bald,
Had been laid up in memory's store,
In all its gloom to be recalled,
When tutoring sorrow should impress
The lesson of her first distress.

(16)

Then, too, she saw, o'ersnowed with age,
Her grandsire's face, so sad yet kind,
Smiling on her, his heritage,
The child his son had left behind.
Old was she now, for she could see
Her grandsire, agéd like the tree.

(17)

As flowers her eager heart once fired
With love for things of joyous cast,
These visions in her soul inspired
Love for the sadder things that last:
The sire by age and trouble bent,
The tree by winds and lightnings rent.

(18)

Sleep left her eyes, but fixed them still;
The living oak above her gleamed.
She gazed at it with wondering thrill
As when beneath its boughs she dreamed.
She looked about, but could not see
The face that smiled beside the tree.

(19)

Forthwith she to the cottage ran,
To catch the sire in his retreat,
She found him there,—the agéd man,—
Calm-sitting on a mossy seat.
'T was then a keener sense awoke
And to her soul in visions spoke.

(20)

He tells how once the raven reared
Her young upon the leafy crest;
How now the oak by lightning seared
Affords no shelter for a nest.
With this her simple thoughts he led
To how the bird the prophet fed.

(21)

Then did she feel that he was poor;
That on a scanty crust he fared.
She longed to see within his door
The frugal meal she oft had shared,
And prayed the raven in her need
To do for them the loving deed.

(22)

Through every grove she poured her lay,
This drooping Lily of the Vale;
As through the brakes she took her way
She told the thrush her touching tale,
And bade it in her service press
The bird that waits on man's distress.

(23)

So, like a creature on the wing,
She spoke her griefs to all she met.
The thrush had taught her how to sing,
And to his note her plaint she set.
As 'neath the trees her footsteps pass,
The coneys peep from out the grass.

(24)

She thought the thrush's mellow strain
Was answering with a note of joy,
She thought he led his feathered train
To listen to her sad decoy,—
But not to her the raven sped
Who brought from heaven the prophet's bread.

(25)

Meantime her grandsire day by day
'Mid hunger-pangs still hopeful smiled,
Trying to hide his pains away
From her, the watchful, loving child.
She saw him sink upon his bed,
But by no raven was he fed.

(26)

Again through brake and bush she flew;
Beyond the wood there lay the field:
Though unknown paths broke on her view,
To childish fears she would not yield,
But looked at heaven and saw its scope,
Taught by her mother where was hope.

(27)

And then she to her mother said,
"Can God the prophet's raven spare?
For grandsire lies upon his bed,
And cannot earn his daily fare.
All father's work he leaves undone,
And says I soon shall be alone."

(28)

She took the road, and seemed to tread
The buoyant air that past her blew.
She cast her looks about in dread,
As on the unknown path she flew.
At last she stopped and gazed in fear,—
The place was strange, and no one near.

(29)

And then she to her father said,
"Can God the prophet's raven spare?
For grandsire lies upon his bed,
And cannot earn his daily fare.
He leaves the work you left undone,
And says I soon shall be alone."

(30)

Her slack'ning pace now plainly told
The path was long for timid feet.
She felt her heart no longer bold:
Oft she looked back the wood to greet.
Her wood from sight a moment gone,
She felt herself indeed alone.

(31)

She stood where hills and valleys blend;
One struggle more, and heaven seemed nigh.
Beyond where fields and woods ascend,
She saw a mansion towering high,
A noble lady's home, that seemed
To her the heaven of which she dreamed.

(32)

"Could I," she thought, "that hill ascend,
Then should I see the lady's face.
She lives above, where troubles end,
And I have found her heavenly place.
God gives her plenty for the poor,
Who come home laden from her door."

(33)

She looked till flashed across her dreams
A sight that all her spirit fired;
A form behind the window gleams,—
Could it be she so long desired?
Through windows in that stately pile,
She thought she saw a human smile.

(34)

And then she to the lady said,
"Can God the prophet's raven spare?
For grandsire lies upon his bed,
And cannot earn his daily fare.
All father's work he leaves undone,
And says I soon shall be alone."

(35)

The mansion stood against the sun:
There long she looked for her reply.
The ball of fire whose course had run,
Filling with red the western sky,
Seemed awful to her childish sight:
She turned her troubled steps for flight.

(36)

Dared she but enter at the gate
To reach that mansion vast and fair,
Then could she all her tale relate
To that sweet lady dwelling there.
But all her little hope had fled:
With fainting steps she homeward sped.

(37)

First slowly, then with swifter pace
She outran terror at her heels,
As if to win with Death the race,
Whose shroud now brushing by she feels.
She starts at every rugged bank,
For with the sun her spirit sank.

(38)

The orb, yet vast beyond the height,
Had set more early in the wood;
But o'er the trees the lingering light
Spread floating in a rosy flood.
The birds sank one by one to rest,
As pale and paler grew the west.

(39)

She spied her cot, O vision sweet!
A rushlight through the lattice flamed,
And threw its radiance at her feet,
As it the grudging twilight shamed.
Through diamond panes a glimpse to snatch,
She held her finger on the latch.

(40)

No sound, no breath she heard above,
Where grandsire in the garret lay.
But one was there whose looks of love,
"Poor little orphan," seemed to say.
She knew the chaplain's kindly face;
The bearer of the lady's grace.

(41)

"Where hast thou been, my darling maid?
Reply to one who likes thee well."
"To warble to the birds," she said;
"The raven all my wants to tell.
I sang to them their pretty note,
Oft heard, and learned at last by rote."

(42)

"Why call the raven to thy door,
Thy little heart's distress to share?"
"Because," said she, "the sire is poor,
And has not earned his daily fare.
All father's work he leaves undone,
And says I soon shall be alone."

(43)

"To kiss thee, child, he would have stayed,
For oft he called thee to his side.
Where didst thou wander, little maid?"
"I went across the world so wide.
I looked at heaven and saw its scope,
Taught by my mother where was hope.

(44)

"I looked for mother in the sky:
She taught me there my wants to tell;
I looked for father standing by,
For both among the happy dwell;
I cried to them with heart of care,
Can God the prophet's raven spare?

(45)

"Then I came nigh a stately pile,
Where those who ask seek not in vain.
I looked, and saw a human smile,
And thought a lady looked again.
Through windows I beheld her face,
As she looked from her heavenly place.

(46)

"And then I to the lady said,
'Can God the prophet's raven spare?
For grandsire lies upon his bed,
And has not earned his daily fare.
My father's work he leaves undone,
And says I soon shall be alone.'"

(47)

"Thou art not all alone, my child;
Thy griefs that righteous lady hears:
She loves a spirit undefiled;
Her heart is open to thy tears.
Thy father's work at last is done,
And thou shalt never be alone."

The Deadly Nightshade.

(1)

THERE was a haunt, it does not change,
Not while the fiend its path invades;
And he who did its alleys range
Has willed his penance to its shades.
There still the nightshade breathes its pest
On fallen spirits not at rest.

(2)

It is the haunt it was of yore,
A den where thieves and harlots creep:
The voice of Nature heard no more
Where guilt-stained men night-vigil keep,
And crimes like months afresh appear,—
Ere one runs out, another near.

(3)

A haunt where all in common share
The sleepless hour, the murderous toil;
Where Death on all has set his stare,
To mock their gain, to grasp their spoil,
And drag them quivering from their den,
A hardening sight for other men.

(4)

This is the charnel that doth hide
A frantic woman who has gamed
And lost young Nature's virgin pride;
Who walks the squalid streets unshamed,
Wearing the soil of her disgrace:
Her soul's infection on her face.

(5)

O what a theme in evil dwells!
Not pain, not penury can supply
A theme so wide, for it foretells
An ever-weeping progeny,
A brotherhood whose awful chief
Was Sin, the ancestor of Grief.

(6)

A theme more sad in evil dwells
Than anguish from the mother wrings.
Its fruits this woman's life foretells
Ere at her breast her infant clings.
From purest founts the new soul came
To nestle in her lap of shame.

(7)

Where only shadows rose and set,
And love at morn awakened not,
This child of woe his being met,
To share in love his mother's lot.
His very innocence a charm
To turn her heart from pending harm.

(8)

The moaning mother through the gloom
Saw him draw in his early breath;
Her soul too conscious of his doom;
On one side life, on one side death!
She saw what portion then befell
A child of heaven new-born to hell.

(9)

His place of birth the skies deplored,
No trees, no brooks, no meadows seen;
But still his heart the skies adored
Before he saw the fields were green.
Born amid broils, in squalor bred,
How knew his soul to where it sped?

(10)

Now many hands the infant train
To shed with sobs the guileful tear,
Reared as a prodigy of pain
That gentle natures pay to hear.
And many listened and bestowed;
For younger tears had never flowed.

(11)

Held at his mother's hand, he hung
A broken spray with misery's drip;
As often to the ground he clung,—
His passion bursting at his lip.
Dragged at her arm along the stones,
His feet grew tender to the bones.

(12)

Her eyes of prey like fangs she laid
On all who gave a hurried look.
In her child's name she whined for aid,
Not pausing till the coin she took,
When rushing to the public store,
She vanished through the slamming door.

(13)

With spreading nostril, eyes of flame,
Before the shrine of death she stands,
The infant by her, sick and lame,
The lava trembling in her hands.
She drinks the fire, with rapture frowns;
In it the fiend of sorrow drowns.

(14)

This is Dorado, and it yields
A golden harvest to the State.
A pious nation reaps its fields,
But buries there the profligate.
Why then the meagre fine compel?
Why shut the drunkard in a cell?

(15)

Locked up in prison, left to rage,
A soul burned by its inward fires,
Hope is not present to assuage
The anguish of her fierce desires.
Such was the mother that befell
This child of heaven new-born to hell.

(16)

Not far away from infancy—
Through weary time a single stage,
The livelong years had hustled by
But left him still of tender age,
When from the frequent blow he fled,
Outside the doors to make his bed.

(17)

Where odours wander, dank and foul,
Through crowded streets and dwellings lone,
By day and night his footsteps prowl;
His wants, not many, asked by none:
The roads were new he hourly crossed,
Yet was his way not wholly lost.

(18)

When hunger came and need of bread,
He asked but of the stinted few:
Afraid to raise his drooping head
Except to those who famine knew;
These he believed their crust would break,
And share with him for pity's sake.

(19)

Hopeful, he glides into a den
Up whose dusk path a shudder flew,
And asks of sick, half-famished men
Whose strength no plenty could renew.
Yet with what startling oaths they rave,
And bid him run his neck to save!

(20)

Still to the poor is his appeal,
And they his mild entreaty spurn:
Some whisper, Be a man and steal;
Some bid him to the gallows turn.
Child-like he credits all he hears,
And rests his troubled heart in tears.

(21)

He sleeps, but oft starts up in fear,
For his dark mother's shadow coils
About his visions; ever near,
It dogs his steps, his slumber foils.
Yet are there moments in his dreams
When air-piled plenty on him gleams.

(22)

Hope, 'mid those shapes of famine sent,
Smiled on him;—she is Childhood's bride!
The mother's image, o'er him bent,
Could not the angel wholly hide,—
Kind Hope;—her halo o'er him plays,
And all but hunger's pang allays.

(23)

Then did he long for once to taste
The reeking viands, as their smell
From cellar gratings ran to waste;
Whose gusts the passing crowd repel.
Like Beauty with a rose regaled,
The grateful vapour he inhaled.

(24)

Less favoured than the dog outside,
He lingers by some savoury mass;
He watches mouths that open wide,
And sees them eating through the glass.
Oft his own lips he opes and shuts,
And sympathy his fancy gluts.

(25)

So, oft a-hungered has he stood,
And yarn of fasting fancy spun,
As wistfully he watched the food
With one foot out prepared to run,
In vague misgiving of his right
To revel in the dainty sight.

(26)

Harmless, yet to the base akin,
He feels a blot no eye could see,
And drags his rags about his skin
To hide from view his pedigree.
He deems himself a thief by birth,
An alien on the teeming earth.

(27)

He begged not, but as one entranced
Admired the gay and wealthy throng;
But if on him the curious glanced,
He was abashed and slunk along;
He cared no more, the spell once broke,
Scenes of false plenty to invoke.

(28)

The man of charity beholds
The vagrant with a pent-up grief;
He stops reprovingly, he scolds,
But fails to give the child relief;
'So sad to see the idle thrive
Who on another's earnings live.'

(29)

Then comes the child, this ill-sown seed,
To sweep the purlieus and the wynds,
But few bethink them of his need,
And scanty is the help he finds.
At times he walks upon his head:
A form of prayer for daily bread.

(30)

Now seem his days for sorrow made!
He hears that men on Sunday pray;
A world's proud secret on parade
To him appears the Sabbath-day.
Though some stray truths may on him shine,
They have not hands or voice divine.

(31)

Lights sometimes reach him from afar,
But how is he their paths to keep?
Though lit in heaven, the falling star
Burns out, is buried in the deep.
Must he then sink beneath a spell
Forged in the alphabet of hell?

(32)

Must he then sink, this homeless child?
Brothers he hath, a mighty host
Who shun him as a thing defiled,
Saying, "'T is sad, but he is lost."
"Are we our brother's keeper?" "Yea"—
A voice shall answer on that Day.

The Poet.

(1)

GREY locks, the banner of the wise;
Their pride discharged by bleaching age;
Inscribed with worn-out destinies,
With battle's sign without its rage;
The dregs of earth from them effaced,
And Time's pale hand upon them traced.

(2)

Grey eyes that look their evening dreams,
  Glittering with memories unspoke;
Wan cheeks, that bear the many seams
  Of trouble's shock and ending stroke,
Whereon fixed pallor waits the call
That, from the darkness, comes to all.

(3)

A man of heart and aim so matched,
  They journeyed on as two in one;
The heart and aim each other watched,
  And ever asked what each had done:
The noblest end of Nature served,
And never from their purpose swerved.

(4)

He mused; he wrote; he slowly aged;
  Sung as no other singer dared;
While nations their grim battles waged.
  To him her face veiled Nature bared!
This grace alone sufficed to bless:
Deep was his love but passionless.

(5)

While stirred by every wayside flower
  Blooming amid the lakes and hills,
He lived a martyr to that power
  Which only bursts the heart it fills;
Which scales, for nought, emotion's height,—
Crushed through its own returning might.

(6)

Imagination's tidal wave
  He governed with a kingly mind,—
Held it to heart, to thought a slave,
  Though hard its flood to stem and bind;
Would let it wash the universe;
Then with its ebb again disperse.

(7)

The world went on its noisy round:
  He held his calm unvarying way,
As, step by step o'er even ground,
  Day gains on night, and night on day.
The spring would come, and come once more;
None knew it from the spring before.

(8)

But he whom Nature smiled upon,
Beheld a trail of light, a ring,
Left in the pathway of the sun;
To him the spring was a new spring.
The opening leaves were newly green—
New-burnished were the skies between.

(9)

He ranged, unheeding of the hour,
The hills, the glades, the forests' night;
Crossing the paths where sunbeams pour
Through walls of leaves a river's light;
Halting, some curious sight to see,
If but how ivy climbed the tree;

(10)

Or how the oak some leafless fork
Shot out, a memory of the scene
Where the blind lightning did its work,
Branching like antlers, mossed and green,
From out the cave of verdurous shade;
Pointing weird shadows down the glade.

(11)

One knoll he loved, the chestnut-strand;
Leaves spread like fingers—arms that hung
In feathering sweep, and, flower in hand,
Dandled the blossoms as they swung;
Their rising slopes a sunny field
Deep-hollowed for the shade they yield.

(12)

There stood he where leaf-chambers rang
With thrush and linnet's mingled song,
While, out of turn, the blackbird sang,
Eager the concert to prolong,
Scattering rich music, sweeter set
Than warbled throb of clarionet.

(13)

Faint waves of sound would come and go,
Where far-off elms the sunset spanned,
That seemed the rooks, then seemed the flow
Of waves upon a pebbly sand;
While visions floated o'er the woods
Of distant shores and grating floods.

(14)

Can Nature fill the heart's desire?—
To look on beauty made it his:—
Yet, in him lived a growing fire;
With others he would share his bliss—
Share it, and reap immortal fame,—
Share it, and leave a deathless name.

(15)

Thus dreamed he; yet for trial's sake,
The vision came but to betray:
'T was his, it seemed, the paths to take
That in the shadow pass away,—
To be rejected by his kind,
To leave no living name behind.

(16)

Then towards the evening of his rest,
Stung by his foes of meaner race,
He seemed man's uninvited guest;—
The gates of fame shut in his face!
Still vain his hope the goal to win:
Must he, then, die ere life begin?

(17)

Proudly he drifted on,—his age,
His genius full for fortune's tide.
Then he began his life to gauge,
With his austere and lofty pride.
Yet did the forest hear the sigh
His great soul breathed when none was nigh.

(18)

He asked was his the common lot,
To trace his name on shifting sand,—
The purpose of his toils forgot,
And vain the cunning of his hand.
Was the lone faculty divine
To burn, but not on men to shine?

(19)

Why, with its advent ever near,
Had he not seized the wreath of fame,
Though others, with their noise and gear,
His own pure note had put to shame.
A voice, it seemed, an answer bore:
"These things shall trouble thee no more."

(20)

In thoughtful mood, his steps he turned,
To seek his rustic home again;
Then came a light, and in him burned,
Gilding the meaning of his pain.
It was a ray through darkness shot:
It broke the secret of his lot.

(21)

Brooding before the fire, his gaze
Hangs vacant o'er its ember-cell,
Yet sees there many a vanished face
That glows as in a pensive hell,—
Shrinking away to less and less,
Then fading into nothingness.

(22)

Soon, two opposing mirrors glow,
Where shine the future and the past,
And image after image show
In the red light the embers cast:
Deep in the glow the pageant shines;
The poet all its truth divines.

(23)

His past as one long present glares.
In it he lives his life again,
To glory in his former cares;—
He finds not one that was in vain.
On their bright gallery intent,
He sees the term of trial spent.

(24)

That is not all,—the mirror thrown
Upon his future, shows that Time
Has marked the poet for his own;
That, in his destiny sublime,
Upon his soul these trials came
To feed, to purify its flame.

(25)

The purblind foes he knew of old
Distorted o'er those mirrors drift.
Compelled their purpose to unfold
To all who minds and motives sift—
The fountain of the poisoned jet,
The sting that in his flesh was set.

(26)

While he had read for human kind
  What breathes from Nature's sacred face,
They saw it not—for they were blind—
  This gift for all the human race.
These he beholds borne down at last,
By the same flood that whelms the past.

(27)

Becalmed on her divinest height,
  Lives Nature's ever-musing sage,
New orders calling into light;—
  The masters of a grander age.
To Nature true, and true to Art,
Thus the great poet played his part.

DALZIEL BROTHERS, CAMDEN PRESS, N.W.

DR. HAKE'S POEMS.

M A D E L I N E ;

WITH OTHER POEMS.

BY THOMAS GORDON HAKE, M.D.

Crown 8vo, *7s. 6d.*

"The structure of the verse (in 'Madeline') is even exceptionally grand and well combined. . . . . The form of expression adopted in this poem ('Old Souls') is of the highest order of homely pathos, to which no common word comes amiss, and yet in which the sense of reverence and appropriateness is everywhere perfect. . . . Many of these [the shorter poems] reveal the same tender thought for human suffering which is the great charm of the 'Parables.' It appears to us, then, that Dr. Hake is, in relation to his own time, as original a poet as one can well conceive possible. He is uninfluenced by any styles or mannerisms of the day to so absolute a degree as to tempt one to believe that the latest English singer he may have even heard of is Wordsworth; while in some respects his ideas and points of view are newer than the newest in vogue; and the external affinity frequently traceable to elder poets only throws this essential independence into startling and, at times, almost whimsical relief." —*Academy.*

"The book has the charm of true poetry. The coming of Daphne and her meeting with Madeline are described with exceeding power and delicacy. The mournful plaint of Madeline to Daphne cannot be too highly praised, and there is pathos of the truest sort in the portrayal of her heartrending woe. . . . The 'Lily of the Valley' and 'The Deadly Nightshade'—parables, the one of virtue, the other of vice—are both charming. . . . Dr. Hake generally succeeds best in slight touches of description, apt similes, and striking metaphors, that at once attract the reader's notice, and that straightway make a home for themselves in his memory."—*Examiner.*

"The ministry of the angel Daphne to her erring human sister is frequently related in strains of pure and elevated tenderness. Nor does the poet who can show so much delicacy fail in strength. The description of Madeline as she passes in trance to her vengeance is full of vivid pictures and charged with tragic feeling. . . . The individuality of the writer lies in his deep sympathy with whatever affects the being and condition of man. . . . Taken as a whole, the book has high and unusual claims."—*Athenæum.*

"Classical lore has had considerable influence upon the author of 'Madeline'. . . . It exhibits a great deal of true poetic feeling."—*Morning Post.*

"It ['Madeline'] is full of pure and noble thought and of fine imagery. . . . There is great power in 'Old Souls,' the teaching of which, inexpressibly tender and solemn, pierces through the grotesque form employed by the author. . . . Their originality, their fire and their quality, no less than their sustained nobility of aim and effort, will secure for them [the poems] a select circle of educated readers."—*Sunday Times.*

"The poem of 'Madeline' is evidently the production of a practised pen. The conceptions are those of a true poet. . . . Mr. Hake is an attentive student of the deep problems connected with human life and nature. This is very noticeable in his tales. . . ."—*Guernsey Mail and Telegraph.*

"That he (the author) possesses a considerable share of the 'vision and the faculty divine' we might give many extracts to prove. . . . There are many smaller poems of much beauty in the volume, which, taken all together, show Dr. Hake to be a poet of no inconsiderable powers."—*Morning Advertiser.*

"There are four ('Parables') altogether, and to read any of the four is to read something that will dwell long on the memory. . . . As a thinker Dr. Hake is original and careful; as a teacher he is genial, sympathetic, and earnest; as a poet he is musical, finished, and sure-footed. He is humorous without being coarse, feeling without being sentimental, and quaint without the affectation of quaintness."—*New Monthly Magazine.*

". . . . It is a rare pleasure to take up a volume of verse by an author who has hitherto been unknown to us, and find that his faculty of expression, though very considerable, actually halts behind his faculty of thought and feeling. . . . Dr. Hake must be congratulated on having produced a book of poems which places him beyond all doubt within an exceeding select circle of writers. . . . One of Dr. Hake's Parables, called 'Old Souls to mend,' is most artless, most audacious, or both. . . . Ideas and images are grouped together according to some law which the ordinary reader fails to detect, though he can recognize the beauty of the effect produced. We bid a farewell, which we hope is not final, to Dr. Hake, with a confident sense that there is another really original poet among us."—*Guardian.*

"It is no common mind that could have written that quaint poem called 'Old Souls,' and we venture to say that those who read it once will read it twice."—*Saturday Review.*

CHAPMAN & HALL, 193 PICCADILLY.

CHAPMAN & HALL'S PUBLICATIONS.

THOMAS CARLYLE'S WORKS.

LIBRARY EDITION, COMPLETE.

Handsomely printed in demy 8vo, cloth, with Portraits and Maps.

SARTOR RESARTUS.
THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF HERR TEUFELSDROCH.
With a Portrait, 7*s.* 6*d.*
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.
A HISTORY.
3 vols, each 9*s.*
LIFE OF SCHILLER AND EXAMINATION OF HIS WRITINGS.
With Portrait and Plates, 7*s.* 6*d.*
CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS.
6 vols, each 9*s.*
HEROES, HERO-WORSHIP, AND THE HEROIC IN HISTORY.
With a Portrait, 7*s.* 6*d.*
PAST AND PRESENT.
With a Portrait, 9*s.*
OLIVER CROMWELL'S LETTERS AND SPEECHES.
With Portraits, 5 vols., each 9*s.*
LATTER-DAY PAMPHLETS. 9*s.*
LIFE OF JOHN STERLING.
With Portrait, 9*s.*
HISTORY OF FREDERICK THE SECOND.
With numerous Portraits and Maps, 10 vols., each 9*s.*
TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GERMAN.
3 vols., each 9*s.*
GENERAL INDEX.
8vo, cloth, 6*s.*

PEOPLE'S EDITION. IN MONTHLY TWO-SHILLING VOLUMES,

Small crown 8vo, consisting of the following Volumes:

SARTOR RESARTUS.
1 vol., with Portrait of Mr. CARLYLE.
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. 3 vols.
LIFE OF JOHN STERLING. 1 vol.
OLIVER CROMWELL'S LETTERS AND SPEECHES. 5 vols.
HERO-WORSHIP. 1 vol.
PAST AND PRESENT. 1 vol.
CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS. 7 vols.

CHEAP AND UNIFORM EDITION.

In Twenty-three Vols., crown 8vo, cloth.

CHARLES DICKENS'S WORKS.

ILLUSTRATED LIBRARY EDITION.

With the Original Illustrations, Twenty-six Vols., post 8vo, cloth, 8*s.* per vol.

			s.	*d.*
PICKWICK PAPERS	43	Illustrations, 2 vols.	16	0
NICHOLAS NICKLEBY	39	„ 2 vols.	16	0
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT	40	„ 2 vols.	16	0
OLD CURIOSITY SHOP *and* REPRINTED PIECES	36	„ 2 vols.	16	0
BARNABY RUDGE *and* HARD TIMES	36	„ 2 vols.	16	0
BLEAK HOUSE	40	„ 2 vols.	16	0
LITTLE DORRIT	40	„ 2 vols.	16	0
DOMBEY AND SON	38	„ 2 vols.	16	0
DAVID COPPERFIELD	38	„ 2 vols.	16	0
OUR MUTUAL FRIEND	40	„ 2 vols.	16	0
SKETCHES BY BOZ	39	„ 1 vol.	8	0
OLIVER TWIST	24	„ 1 vol.	8	0
CHRISTMAS BOOKS	17	„ 1 vol.	8	0
A TALE OF TWO CITIES	16	„ 1 vol.	8	0
GREAT EXPECTATIONS	8	„ 1 vol.	8	0
PICTURES FROM ITALY *and* AMERICAN NOTES	8	„ 1 vol.	8	0

THE "CHARLES DICKENS" EDITION.

In Nineteen Vols., crown 8vo, with Illustrations.

			s.	*d.*
PICKWICK PAPERS	8	Illustrations	3	6
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT	8	„	3	6
DOMBEY AND SON	8	„	3	6
NICHOLAS NICKLEBY	8	„	3	6
DAVID COPPERFIELD	8	„	3	6
BLEAK HOUSE	8	„	3	6
LITTLE DORRIT	8	„	3	6
OUR MUTUAL FRIEND	8	„	3	6
A TALE OF TWO CITIES	8	„	3	0
SKETCHES BY BOZ	8	„	3	0
AMERICAN NOTES *and* REPRINTED PIECES	8	„	3	0
BARNABY RUDGE	8	„	3	0
CHRISTMAS BOOKS	8	„	3	0
OLD CURIOSITY SHOP	8	„	3	0
OLIVER TWIST	8	„	3	0
GREAT EXPECTATIONS	8	„	3	0
HARD TIMES *and* PICTURES FROM ITALY	8	„	3	0
UNCOMMERCIAL TRAVELLER	4	„	3	0
A CHILD'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND	4	„	3	6

The above Works are sold separately.

THE HOUSEHOLD EDITION.

OLIVER TWIST. Complete in 1 vol., with 28 Illustrations, cloth gilt, 2*s.* 6*d*; in paper covers, 1*s.* 6*d.*

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT. Complete in 1 vol., with 59 Illustrations, cloth gilt, 4*s*; in paper covers, 3*s.*

DAVID COPPERFIELD *now publishing.*

New Novel by the Author of "Annals of an Eventful Life."

THREE TO ONE; or, Some Passages out of the Life of Amicia Lady SWEETAPPLE. By GEORGE WEBBE DASENT, D.C.L., Author of "Annals of an Eventful Life." In 3 vols.

ROME. By FRANCIS WEY. Containing 246 magnificent Engravings. [*In the press.*

THIRTY YEARS IN THE HAREM; or, Life in Turkey. By Madame KIBRIZLI MEHEMET PASHA. [*In the press.*

TRY CRACOW AND THE CARPATHIANS. By Captain HUTCHINSON, R.A., F.R.G.S., Author of "Try Lapland." [*In the press.*

UP IN THE NORTH. Notes of a Journey from London to Lulea and into Lapland. By THOMAS SHAIRP. [*In the press.*

TRAVELS IN HINDO-CHINA AND IN CHINA. By LOUIS DE CARNÉ. [*In the press.*

THE LIFE OF ROUSSEAU. By JOHN MORLEY. [*In the press.*

THE HIGHLANDS OF CENTRAL INDIA. By the late Captain FORSYTH. Second Edition, demy 8vo, price 18*s.*

THE HUMAN RACE. By LOUIS FIGUIER. With numerous Illustrations. [*In the press.*

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE READINGS OF CHARLES DICKENS. By CHARLES KENT. [*In the press.*

RABIES AND HYDROPHOBIA. By GEORGE FLEMING, F.R.G.S., &c. With Illustrations. [*In the press.*

A NEW NOVEL. By WHYTE-MELVILLE.

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM 1830. By WILLIAM NASSAU MOLESWORTH. Vol II. [*In the press.*

PRACTICAL HORSE-SHOEING. By G. FLEMING, F.R.G.S., &c. 8vo, sewed, with Illustrations, price 2*s.*

THE OCEAN, THE ATMOSPHERE, AND LIFE. By ELISEE RECLUS. With 207 Illustrations and 27 Coloured Maps. Demy 8vo. [*In the press.*

Forming the Second Series of

THE EARTH.

A Descriptive History of the Phenomena and Life of the Globe.

The Eleventh Edition is ready this day of

THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS. By JOHN FORSTER. Vol I. 1812—1842. Demy 8vo, With Portraits and other Illustrations, price 12*s*.

ROSSELL'S POSTHUMOUS PAPERS. Translated from the French. Crown 8vo, price 8*s*.

VOLTAIRE. By JOHN MORLEY. Demy 8vo, price 14*s*.

THE LIFE OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH. By JOHN FORSTER. Fifth Edition. With additional Notes, the Original Illustrations, several additional Designs, and two beautifully engraved Portraits. 2 vols. 21*s*.

SIR JOHN ELIOT: a Biography. By JOHN FORSTER. A New and Popular Edition, with Portraits. In 2 vols. 14*s*.

THE KERAMIC GALLERY, comprising about 600 Photographic Illustrations of Rare, Curious, and Choice Examples of Pottery and Porcelain, from the Earliest Times to the Present, selected by the Author from the British Museum, the South Kensington Museum, the Geological Museum, and various Private Collections. With Historical Notices and Descriptions. By WILLIAM CHAFFERS. In 2 handsome volumes, £4 4*s*.

LETTERS AND EXTRACTS FROM THE OCCASIONAL WRITINGS OF J. BEETE JUKES, M.A., F.R.S., late Director of the Geological Survey in Ireland. Edited, with Memorial Notes, by his SISTER. Comprising Letters from Australia and Newfoundland whilst engaged in the Geological Survey. Post 8vo, with a Portrait, 12*s*.

BLINDNESS AND THE BLIND. By W. HANKS LEVY, F.R.G.S. Crown 8vo, price 7*s*. 6*d*.

THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNE. By P. VESINIER, ex-Member and Secretary of the Commune. Crown 8vo, 7*s*. 6*d*.

PICTURES OF OLD ROME. By FRANCES ELLIOT. New Edition, in 1 vol., 6*s*.

THE DIARY OF AN IDLE WOMAN IN ITALY. By FRANCES ELLIOT. New Edition, in 1 vol., 6*s*.

EXPERIENCES OF A PLANTER IN THE JUNGLES OF MYSORE. By ROBERT H. ELLIOT. 2 vols., demy 8vo, with a Map and Illustrations, 24*s*.

Cheap Edition of WHYTE-MELVILLE'S WORKS.

Crown 8vo, fancy boards, 2*s*. each:

THE WHITE ROSE. CERISE. A Tale of the Last Century.
BROOKS OF BRIDLEMERE. SONGS AND VERSES.
"BONES AND I;" or, The Skeleton at Home.
"M. or N." Similia Similibus Curantur.
CONTRABAND; or, A Losing Hazard.
MARKET HARBOROUGH; or, How Mr. Sawyer went to the Shires.

OUIDA'S NOVELS. Cheap Edition.

FOLLE-FARINE. Crown 8vo., 5*s*. [*Just ready.*
IDALIA. Crown 8vo, 5*s*. CHANDOS. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.
UNDER TWO FLAGS. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.
CECIL CASTLEMAINE'S GAGE. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.
TRICOTRIN: the Story of a Waif and Stray. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.
STRATHMORE; or Wrought by His Own Hand. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.
HELD IN BONDAGE; or, Granville de Vigne. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.
PUCK: His Vicissitudes, Adventures, &c. Crown 8vo, 5*s*.